

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BERLIN 09393 01 OF 02 281756Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----024279 281759Z /41

O 281739Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6352
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USBERLIN IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BERLIN 09393

EXDIS - MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O.11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PGOV, MILI, BQG, AKG
SUBJECT: RUMORS OF GDR RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO
EAST BERLIN

REFS: (A) BONN 21269, (B) BONN 21170, (C) STATE 306481,
(D) BERLIN 9356

1. THREE ALLIED AMBASSADORS TO GDR MET DECEMBER 28
AT FRENCH EMBASSY TO DISCUSS VARIOUS RUMORS INDICATING
THAT GDR MAY TAKE ACTION AFFECTING ACCESS BETWEEN
EAST AND WEST BERLIN, BEGINNING 2400 DECEMBER 31.
MEETING PRODUCED NO NEW INFORMATION ON NATURE OF
RUMORS.

2. IT WAS ASSUMED THAT THE GDR WOULD NOT TAKE
ACTION TO INTERFERE WITH MILITARY ACCESS BETWEEN EAST
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AND WEST BERLIN; SUCH A MOVE WOULD BE VERY SERIOUS
AND AFFECT THE ENTIRE EAST-WEST AGENDA. I CALLED
ATTENTION TO FRENCH REP PERRIN'S DEMARCHE
(REF A) IN WHICH SOVIET FIRST SECRETARY TYUTYUNOV
HAD EXPRESSED SURPRISE ABOUT THE RUMORS AND SAW
NOTHING WHICH WOULD KEEP ALLIES FROM HAVING QUIET
CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S. FRENCH AMBASSADOR BAYLE

HAD NOT RECEIVED A REPORT ON THIS DEMARCHE.

3. UK AMBASSADOR CRADOCK THOUGHT GDR COULD CONCEIVABLY MAKE CHANGES IN PROCEDURES WHICH WOULD REQUIRE ALLIED DIPLOMATS TO USE PASSPORTS AND GDR VISAS TO TRANSIT BETWEEN WEST AND EAST BERLIN. HE SAID THIS CHANGE WOULD NOT NECESSARILY OCCUR BETWEEN 2400 DECEMBER 31 AND 0600 JANUARY 1, BUT COULD BE INSTITUTED AT LATER DATE. I NOTED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THE GDR FOREIGN OFFICE HAD INFORMED US THAT THE CURRENT DIPLOMATIC AUSWEISE WOULD BE VALID UNTIL FEBRUARY 28, WHEN NEW AUSWEISE WOULD BE ISSUED. CRADOCK EXPLAINED THAT THE UK DID NOT USE DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS BUT BMG CARDS ISSUED IN WEST BERLIN ON GROUNDS THAT UK EMBASSY OFFICERS HAD FUNCTIONS RELATING TO ALLIED RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN BERLIN. THE GDR HAD PROTESTED USE OF BMG CARDS AT CROSSINGPOINTS IN SUMMER OF 1976 BUT THEN DROPPED THE MATTER AFTER THE BRITISH RAISED IT WITH THE SOVIETS.

4. THERE SEEMS TO BE GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT A CHANGE REQUIRING CUSTOMS INSPECTION OF DIPLOMATS AT CROSSING POINTS WAS MORE LIKELY BY THE GDR. IT WAS NOTED THAT GDR HAD ALREADY PLACED CUSTOMS SIGNS AT CHECKPOINT CHARLIE. WEST BERLIN CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES IN RECENT WEEKS HAVE EXERCISED CUSTOMS CONTROL AT
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CHECKPOINT CHARLIE WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY. THIS MAY HAVE GIVEN THE GDR AN EXCUSE TO DO THE SAME. THE EFFECT OF THESE CHANGES IS TO GIVE THE DIVIDING LINE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BERLIN THE CHARACTERISTIC OF AN INTERNATIONAL BORDER.

5. DURING THE MEETING WE REVIEWED THE BONN GROUP'S CONTINGENCY PLANNING AS REPORTED IN REF B. I CALLED ATTENTION TO DEPARTMENT INQUIRY CONCERNING THE PRESENTATION OF EMBASSY AND MISSION VEHICLES AT CHECKPOINTS AFTER 2400 DECEMBER 31 TO DETERMINE WHEHTER GDR HAD INSTITUTED NEW MEASURES AFFECTING USE OF DIPLOMATIC AUSWEISE OR FLASH PROCEDURES. I TOLD CRADOCK AND BAYLE THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD BE PREPARED TO SEND VEHICLES ACROSS THE CHECKPOINTS AFTER 2400 DECEMBER 31 IF INSTRUCTED TO DO SO BY WASHINGTON. I STATED THAT SUCH PROBES MIGHT BE USEFUL TO DETERMINE AT AN EARLY STAGE THE PRECISE NATURE OF ANY GDR CHANGE IN PROCEDURES. SUCH INFORMATION WOULD HAVE A BEARING ON THE NATURE AND CONTENT OF THE ALLIED PRESS STATEMENT AND PROTEST TO SOVIETS AS RECOMMEDEC BY THE BONN GROUP.

6. CRADOCK AND BAYLE AGREED TO STAY IN TOUCH AND WAIT FOR SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM CAPITALS.

7. AT THE CLOSE OF THE MEETING BAYLE REPORTED THAT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS DENIAU WOULD VISIT BERLIN JANUARY 12-13 FOR CONSULTATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER AND DEPUTY FOREIGN

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EXDIS - MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

MINISTER NIER. WE SPECULATED ABOUT POSSIBLE GDR MOVES AROUND BERLIN IN THE LIGHT OF THIS SCHEDULED VISIT AND THE REGIME'S STRONG DESIRE FOR REGULAR POLITICAL CONSULTATION WITH WESTERN GOVERNMENTS. CRADOCK DOUBTED WHETHER DENIAU'S VISIT WOULD CAUSE THE GDR TO CHANGE ANY PLANNED ACTIONS AFFECTING BERLIN, NOTING THE VISIT LAST YEAR OF A UK MINISTER. BOLEN

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